



Montgomery County Council

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INFORMATION:

Peggy Erickson (240) 777-7973

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COUNCILMEMBER DACEK CALLS FOR CLOSURE OF GROUP HOME

Councilmember Nancy Dacek (R-Upcounty) today called on the Maryland State Department of Juvenile Justice to close the Crossroads group home in Germantown. Despite extensive efforts to facilitate better relations between the community and the group home, continued incidents involving residents and mismanagement have made the situation impossible, according to Councilmember Dacek.

"Trust has been broken," said Councilmember Dacek, "and there is no way to put things back together for the protection of the community. This home must close."

"I think this is very unfortunate," Mrs. Dacek stated, "because I firmly believe that well-managed group homes have a place in this county. In this case, however, I am not convinced that sufficient corrective action has been taken to ensure the safety of the community."

Mrs. Dacek's statement came after learning today that a group home resident was arrested in an incident at Damascus High School. This follows the arrest of two other former residents last December involved in a four-day rash of burglaries and acts of vandalism in neighborhoods near the group home.

In January, a community meeting was held with elected and appointed officials from the State and County and representatives of the group home's management company to listen to community concerns and to inform the community of efforts to correct the problem. Until today's announcement, Mrs. Dacek was also preparing to work with a Citizen's Advisory Committee that she helped form to explore the possibility of improving relations between the community and the home.

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Throughout the situation Mrs. Dacek had been hopeful that restitution could be made and that trust could be restored, but not at the expense of community safety. Today she felt the damage was too much.

“The management of this home has clearly not been able to take sufficient ownership of the situation,” she said, “and has unfortunately come at the expense of community trust.”

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